

[2006]

WBOR Presents:

//September

**SAVE
WBOR**

BOWDOIN'S MUSIC AND ARTS ZINE

SAVE WBOR!

For decades, WBOR has been broadcasting in the Bowdoin, Brunswick, and Harpswell communities and serving the public interest to the best of its ability. We provide quality music that cannot be found on other stations, intelligent talk shows, and public service announcements, not to mention Flip Your Shit, and the concerts that are funded each year. This past year WBOR came up for FCC re-licensure, a process that occurs every 8 years. Because WBOR management turns over each school year, many necessary data collection proce-

dures were not passed on from station manager to station manager and our application is being closely examined by the FCC. If we are not re-licensed, WBOR will be unable to broadcast as it has been for decades. The current WBOR management, of which Flip Your Shit's staff is a part, has launched a letter campaign to show how widespread support for WBOR is. To sign a letter, please go to the WBOR website, Smith Union, Bart and Greg's DVD Explosion, Bohemian Coffee, Little Dog Coffee Shop, or Bull Moose Records. Thank you for your support!

Editor-in-Chief: Alice Lee
Layout Editor: Zachary Tcheyan
Photography: Adam Keller

As the year begins and Flip Your Shit rockets into its third season of existence it dawns on me that only half the student population at Bowdoin and even fewer members of the Brunswick community has ever seen or heard of our humble music and arts zine. For this, I and my fellow senior editor Ted Power would like to extend a sincere apology. The fact that not a single issue of Flip Your Shit graced the newspaper racks on campus or in town is solely our fault. Actually, it is also Zach Tcheyan's fault a fair bit too. The fact is that both of us were overseas in places with limited internet capability and many more fascinating things to do than write zine articles. Now that we are seniors we solemnly pledge to devote all of our creative energies to the execution of a successful season of musical and artistic reviews. We can only hope that you too will do the same. As always, submissions of any ilk are gladly welcome. Please contact me at alee@bowdoin.edu with questions, comments, concerns, or submissions.

Sincerely,

Alice Lee
Senior Editor

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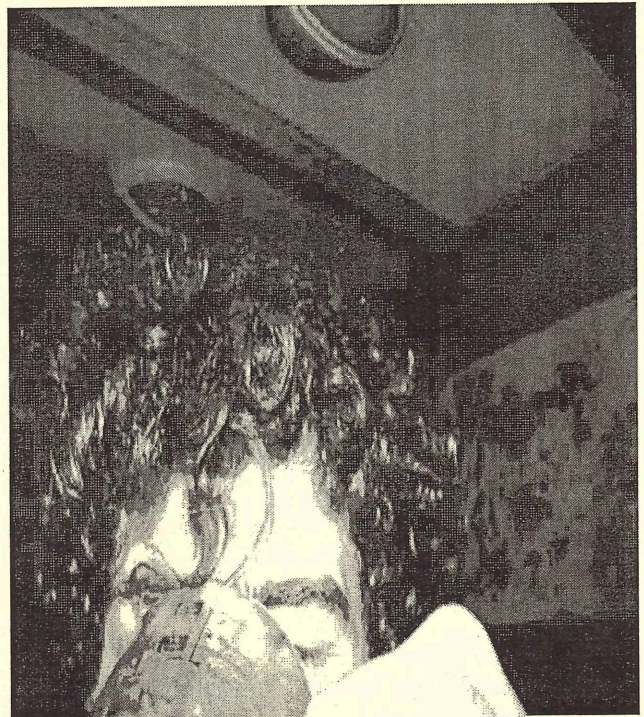
Billy Stepped Out of Time

George Schlesinger

At exactly 2:37 p.m., when the sun streamed through the line of trees, making tapestries of shadows upon the asphalt, Billy stepped out of time. At that moment, his hair did not turn any grayer and his receding hairline ceased to recede. He entered the fourth dimension and noticed that it no longer was plunging incessantly onwards. Then, he noticed that The Energizer bunny had stopped marching and put down its drum sticks, but Billy quickly dismissed this phantasmagorical vision as a delusion. "I forgot to take my pills" he said, and scratched his head. He looked around him and noticed the flocks of people, how they were in a different time than him, and how he felt like he was watching the future unfold by merely observing the present; he people-watched momentarily, lounging in a roadside café with coffee made by a futuristic waitress; she was only mildly futuristic (if you can call it that anyhow), but still existed at 2:45 p.m. 2:37 was of course the time when Billy had achieved his clearest, most crystalline thought that segued nicely into an epiphany, namely the transcendence of time. Billy did not have a polemic with time, in fact he thought he was pretty good friends with the old guy, but at 2:37, he was catapulted into total temporal blackness; with all the time zones forming a Venn-diagram, Billy was not in any oval, he just floated in the white space of time. He fully understood and experienced liminality. There was a vast void that now jangled through his brain. "My mind," he said, "feels like a jellyfish." This is because he lost his center, the very thing that linearly kept him intact. Firmness was elusive, and therefore his brains seemed gelatinous without any real deep foundation.

Today, Billy could not be pigeonholed into

any categories. By losing his center, he could always mutate, (or better yet adapt) like a chameleon, into the burning neon lights of infinity. He was a long, meandering, snaking, stream-of-consciousness sentence that forsook the negative label of a "run-on," purifying it while he knocked down walls that constrained him. He had no boundaries, and endless possibilities.



So then, the only thing he could become was a professor of philosophy, of course with an emphasis on space and time. He would philosophize all day in an office with a cluttered desk and a window view. The fragrant olfactory streams of nag champa incense would bask in the tubes of light randomly highlighting dust particles. Ironically enough, he had no idea where he was most of the time; he would ruminate so intensely that he would teleport to his own world, his own psy-

chical parallel universe. So when you synthesize our friend Billy here, he is removed from time and more often than not is simply not there. He is a vacant entity that drifts to fantastical realms in his own head, but is only a vacuum of blankness to the passer-by. Yearning for days of old, when he helplessly clung to time, in both the digital and

the analog form (while his fingers pried onto the ledge of the hour hand as the second hand closely lagged, attacking him and attempting to push him off into timelessness); he recalled a modern day Miniver Cheevy, a walking anachronism born in the wrong time.

Music Vs. Message: The Dilemma of Lyrics

Alice Lee

As a "foreign correspondent" for Flip Your Shit, I had hoped to find some undiscovered, yet amazingly talented European band about which to write. Sadly, this is not the case. What I found upon arriving in Spain was a haven for bad American pop and a serious preoccupation with the eighties and early nineties. Not to say that I have anything against the early nineties, but my music taste did not cease to develop when Kurt Cobain died. The sheer number of mullets and rampant love of Metallica that I have witnessed here in Cádiz, Spain suggests otherwise of the average Spaniard. As far as the pop goes, it was to be somewhat expected; however, a ratio of 3 or 4 American songs to each song in Spanish seems a bit excessive.

After the first week or two, the initial shock produced by the abundance of American music had worn off, but as I reconsidered the topic in the past week, a more serious problem than sheer abundance arose. Because English language is a required topic in all Spanish primary and secondary schools, I automatically assumed that the majority of the country understood some amount of English. This is definitely not true. After speaking with a multitude of Spaniards, it turns out that Spain's language program is about as effective as the Spanish program in the States- after four years of instruction, it is doubtful that students can form a coherent sentence, let alone

understand song lyrics. The disturbing truth is that, while American music is incredibly popular here, nobody understands a word of the lyrics.

A Spanish friend of mine here who studied abroad in the UK confessed, "I listened to REM (pronounced as one word, rhymes with "femme") yesterday but I couldn't understand any of the words when I listened so I looked at the lyrics in the CD and I understood them all when I read them." Unfortunately, the average Spaniard would not have the motivation to search out written lyrics, nor necessarily the ability to understand them. For the most part, understanding the lyrics involves intense concentration and does not seem to be worth the trouble. So why is an entire country obsessed with music they cannot understand? Is there something about our mediocre music we're missing? Is it actually GOOD if you don't know what's being said?

There is something to be said about the universality of pop music. Whether it's Chinese, Mexican, German, or American, the principle is the same; a catchy tune that repeats, a danceable beat, cliché lyrics, and of course, a sexy music video. Given this formula, lyrics end up being the least important component, and it is easier to understand why these songs are just as popular here as in the States. Maybe when you take away the mind-numbingly boring lyrics the music does get better. As long as you can dance to it

// Continued on page 4

and it gets stuck in your head, who cares what they're saying?

Many of my friends here listen to mainly electronic music, a lot of which originates in the States, but which has very few, if any lyrics, most of which are less important and only add another layer of sound. Listening to Prodigy last night, the constant exclamation was "Que guay! Me gusta el voz!" or "Este sonido es muy guay!" or, "Really cool! I like his voice!" "This sound is really cool!" After so many years of listening to music they don't understand, they have developed an unnatural appreciation for sounds and voices.

A complete disregard for lyrics does not explain the obsession with the early nineties. Many guys that I have met here have claimed Metallica, Alice in Chains, Nirvana, and Radiohead as some of their favorite bands immediately after admitting that they don't speak English. The appeal of Metallica and perhaps Nirvana can be understood to some extent as a primal angry noise, but the others? Although they are great musicians, the brilliance of Alice in Chains and Radiohead lies in the originality and complexity of the lyrics. It's like saying you like string quartets when you can't hear violins!

The most problematic question that arises from this problem of language is this: Is it possible to really love a band if you cannot decipher their message? It is possible that not understanding lyrics provides one with the opportunity to more deeply appreciate musicianship without the distraction of words, but however deep the appreciation, it would still be impossible to tell the difference between Christian rock and normal rock, a distinction that is very important. Imagine the atheist Spaniard (forget Spain's reputation for raging Catholicism for a second) finding out that Creed, their favorite band, is in fact very pro-God!

In summary, there is no easy explanation for the immense popularity of American music in non-English speaking countries. While it is disturbing that they claim to love bands they don't understand, the most disturbing is that they seem to prefer a lack of understanding over listening to music in their own language. Is Spanish music really just that bad? According to my Spanish friend Gabri, Spanish music was fairly awful for a good long time, but has been getting better in the past few years. As he put it "I used to never like Spanish music, but now there are many bands that I like." Perhaps there is still hope for Spanish artists, however they are in competition with a seemingly deep-rooted love of American music.

To truly explore the recent outbreak of decent Spanish music, this foreign correspondent needs more than a month in Spain. Adios!

I am asking you if you love me

Dark down deep and cavernous
I wonder if you hide a candle

Or a speck of red
Examined on rare occasions,

When private is as
Complex as the bright of
Amid a crowd

Sometimes do you know

More intimately than the
Etched web upon your palm

Or blood fighting through veins
That it is the innocent moment just
Before the bell strikes

When breath is caught in anticipation
the possibility of flame
A paintbrush dripping

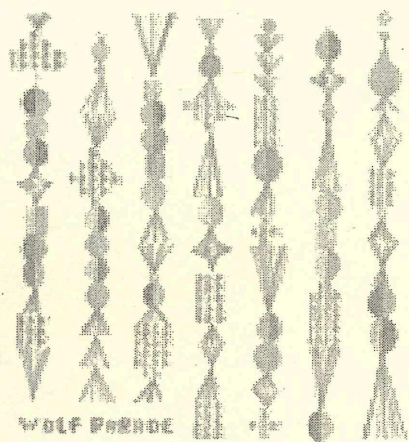
-Alice Lee

Photo by Rachel Zack

*Album Reviews

Wolf Parade *Apologies to the Queen Mary* (Subpop) (2.5/5)

Adam Palternari

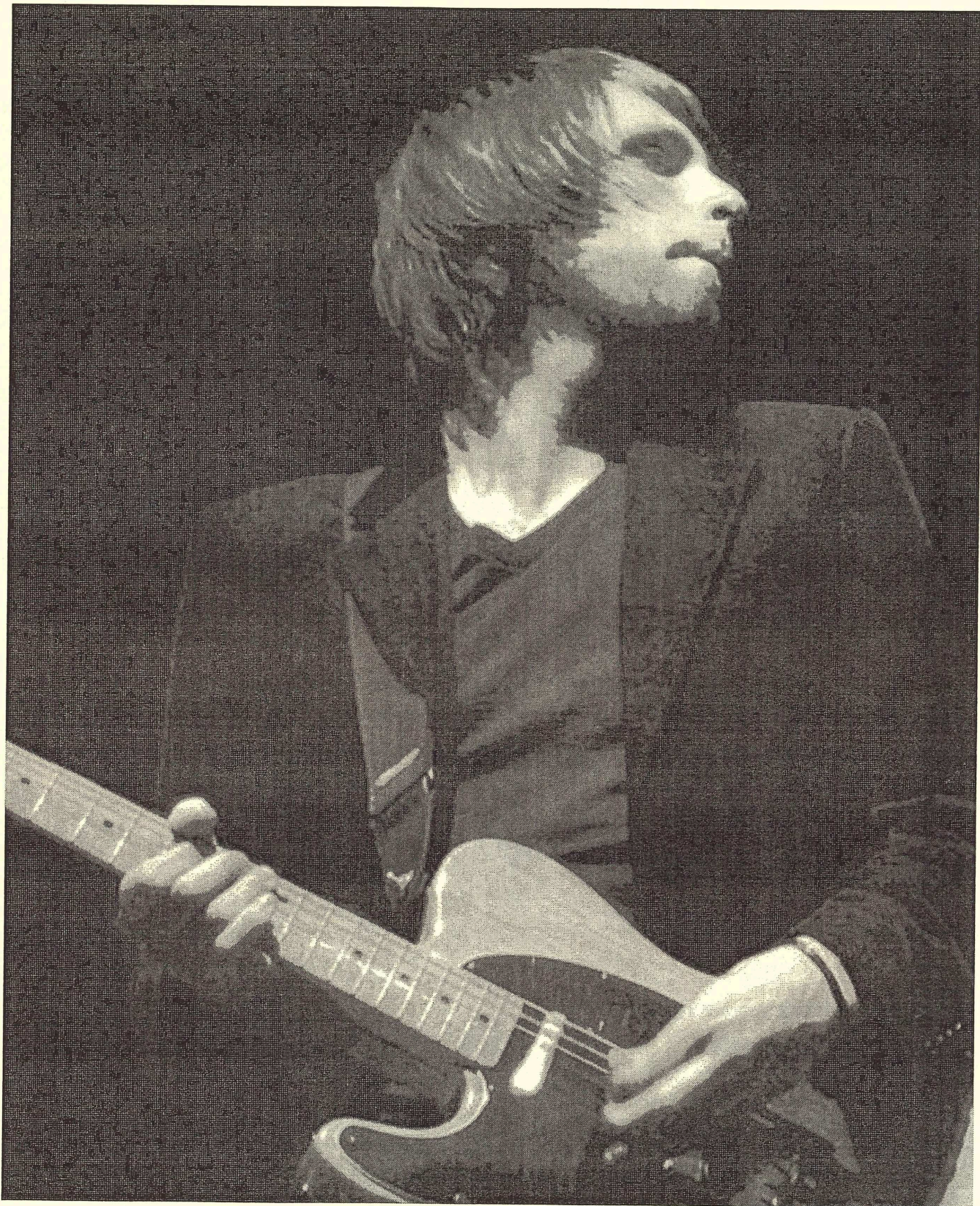


Fun Fact: the Canadian edition of Time magazine picked Wolf Parade's new album *Apologies to the Queen Mary* as one of the most anticipated albums of 2005. Why, you may ask? Their friends could be responsible for some of that (the Arcade Fire's Win Butler all but drooled when asked what he thought about the band) and their city of origin could be as well. Wolf Parade hail from Montreal, a city which by mere mention gains you three points of Indie Cred based solely on the aura of other bands calling the place their home (Unicorns, Stars, Dears, etc.). Being inherently skeptical of any sort of geographic hype – see the recent Sacramento Rock City campaign – it's in the best interest of a fairness to let the Montreal connection fall by the wayside here.

That being said, you can try to divorce Wolf Parade's closest musical peers from the scene before you hit *Play*, but it's difficult once "You Are a Runner and I am My Father's Son" starts. Against a distinctly White Stripes-y fit of bluesy off-beat drum work, lead singer Dan Boeckner croons like a particularly hoarse Isaac Brock imitator. When the song tries to gain momentum with an offhanded guitar solo before the dragging beat becomes insufferable, it's clear that Wolf Parade have trouble shifting up from second gear to third. Things get quite a bit better for the meat of the album, as "Modern World" and "Grounds for Divorce" each present the band's more filled out sound, awash with processed keyboards and eclectic, driving percussion. When they're on it's a treat – Wolf Parade have the ability to make pop songs which sound as fun as the Super Furry Animals but with the Arcade Fire's aching grandiosity.

Unfortunately only about four songs on the album follow this mold. Closer "This Heart's on Fire" is perhaps the most upbeat tune on the album, building up from tense loops of bubbly guitar to an all-out Strokes-esque frenzy. But where the blueprint obviously calls for the song to shoot toward the stars like the best moments of Funeral, Wolf Parade hits the brakes in a thoroughly disappointing way. And yes, I am dropping quite a few names here, but with good reason. Wolf Parade hit their stride when aping most carelessly from their more successful peers. When they step out on their own it's trouble. Half of *Apologies'* cuts

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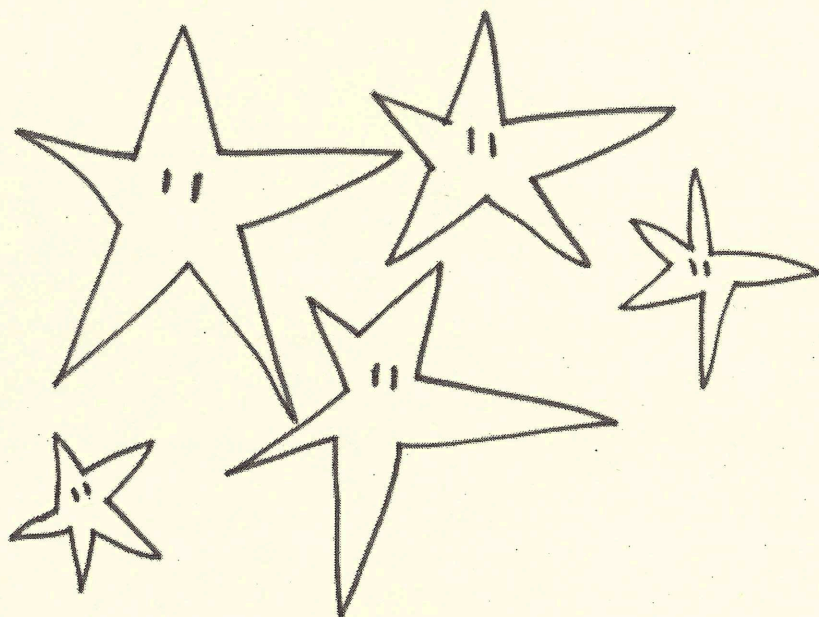


Hot Hot Heat, Photo by Adam Keller

simply sound too labored and thoughtful for this kind of “sloppy” indie pop. There are some great melodies and legitimate hooks buried somewhere in this mess, but on anything but the most up-tempo cuts it becomes too much trouble to extricate them... the Next button becomes ever more enticing.

Time Canada, Now and NME can get as hot and bothered as they want about these guys, but I’m leaving the party early. Wolf Parade have trouble standing on their own without obviously relying on the strengths of their other (more popular) friends. In the end you end up remembering Apologies to the Queen Mary more for its hype and uber-cool indie connections than its fleeting substance. An unnamed DJ on WBOR summed it up most succinctly on his show last Friday – “and now some Wolf Parade... so more middle of the road indie rock.” So when they try to shove this band down our collective throats in a few weeks, let’s try to resurrect that gag reflex and take a look at what you’re eating. It’s pretty bland. Wow, this is starting to sound a little bitter. Alright, fuck it.

BEST ALBUM EVER. Call up MTV2. Period.

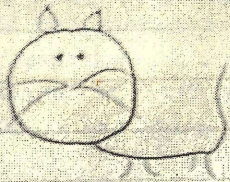


Art: Annie Cronin

Send submissions to alee@bowdoin.edu
or SU box number 460A

This issue, along with back issues of Flip Your Shit, can be viewed at
<http://studorgs.bowdoin.edu/wbor/zine.html>

11/29/05



Very

Important

Animals

by

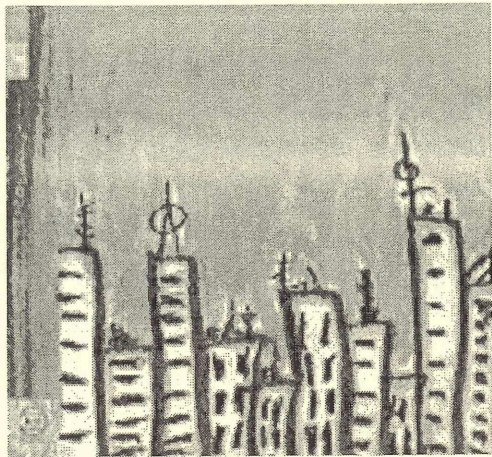
Tehilah

Broken Social Scene, *Broken Social Scene*



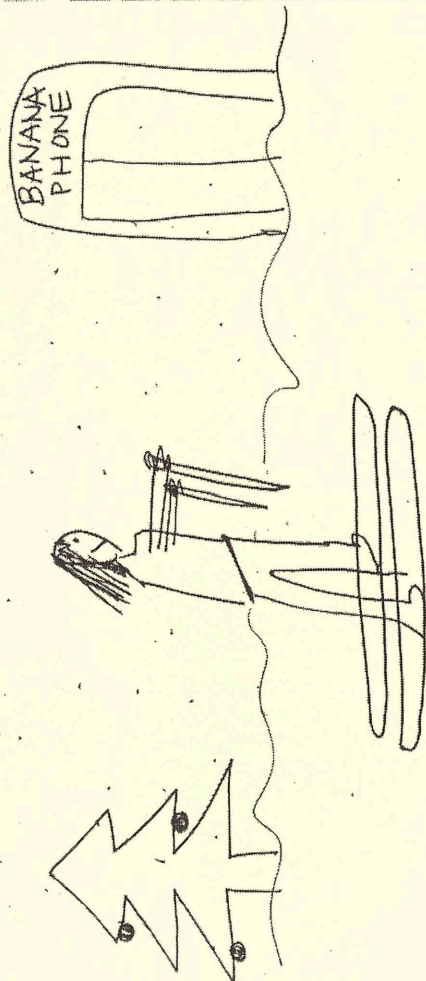
(4.5/5)

Zachary Tcheyan

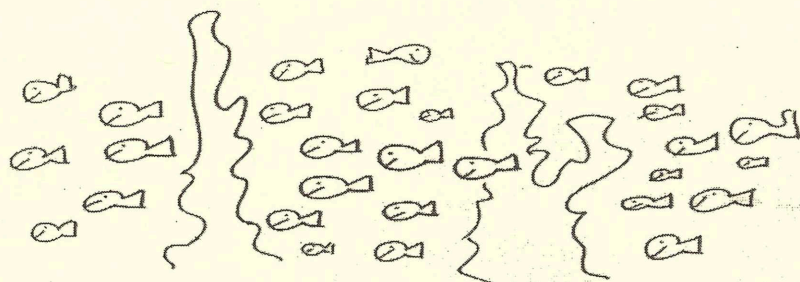


After the release of "You Forget It in People," I couldn't have been more excited about Broken Social Scene. Then it occurred to me that I would have to be patient as there are so many people in Broken Social Scene and it would be terribly difficult to organize all the members, especially since they were also opening their label Arts&Crafts concurrently). So, "You Forget It in People" came out and I liked it and listened. Then the Canadian indie scene started to explode and lots of good and bad bands began appearing and I got distracted. Then, Broken Social Scene announced that they were finishing up a new album. I think I got a little erection in Econ. class when I heard.

I went back to YFIIP and gave it a thorough listen to get ready for the new album. It is truly an achievement. Was it possible that Broken Social could top this? More of the same would be great but, well, the same. At the same time how could Broken Social top their past achievement and continue to improve their sound? More importantly, what would I do if it sucked? I listened. It didn't suck. Thank god.



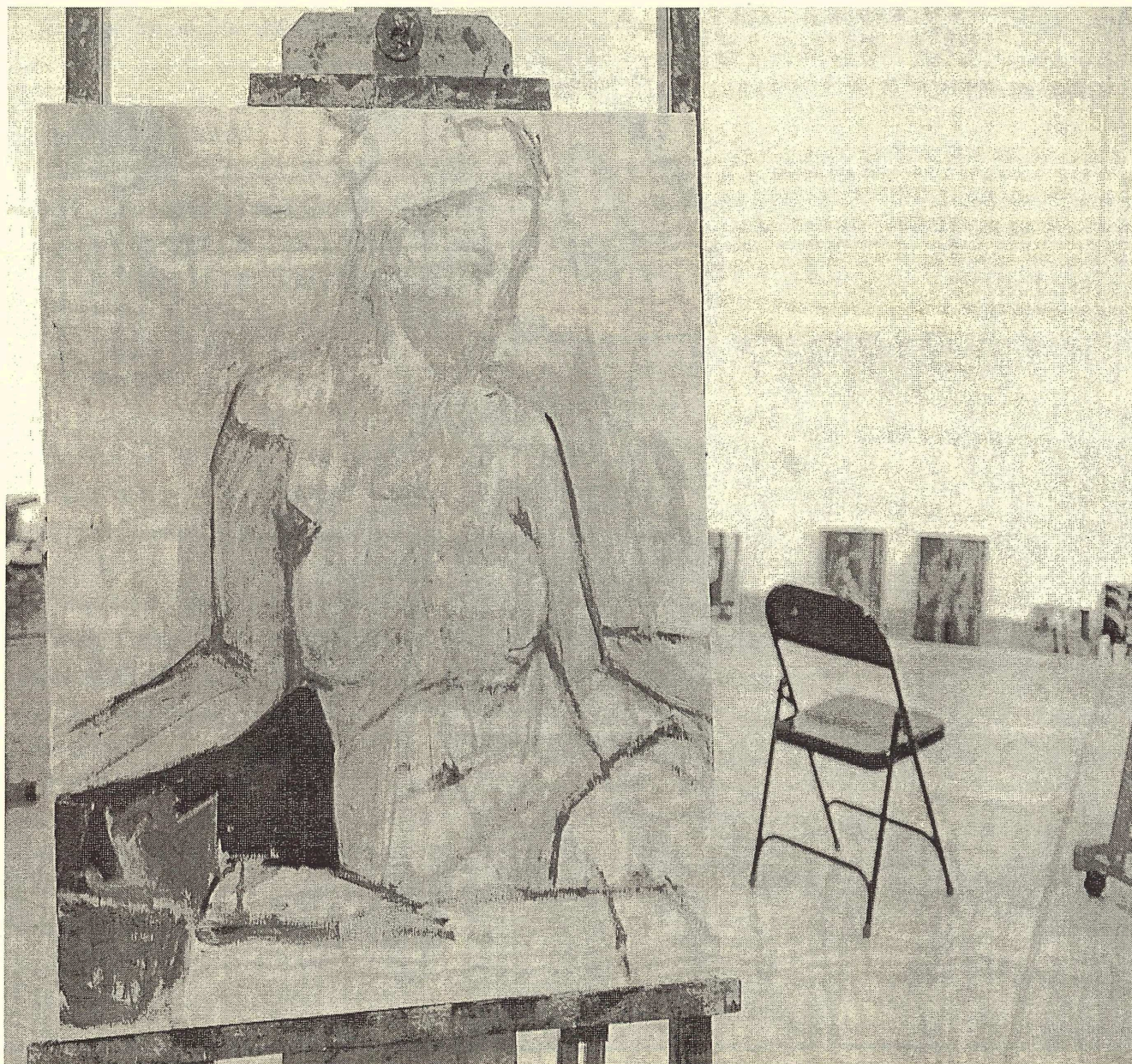
Art: Annie Cronin



At first listen, the album seems quite intimidating, layer after layer of guitar, drums, vocals, and a host of other instruments quickly build and intertwine within each song, making for a certain degree aural sensory overload. Broken Social scene obviously made the conscious decision to mix all the songs in a way so that no particular instrument of vocal part stands apart from the rest. While this makes the music infinitely more interesting in the long run, it also makes each song initially somewhat inaccessible, as there is no few melodies, lyrics, or beats that can be immediately latched onto. The first song to really draw the listener in is "7/4 (Shoreline)". While the song becomes more and more layered as it progresses, it allows the listener to hear the song constructed, rather than jumping straight into it as many of the other tracks. Once you learn to appreciate the scope and depth of the "7/4", the

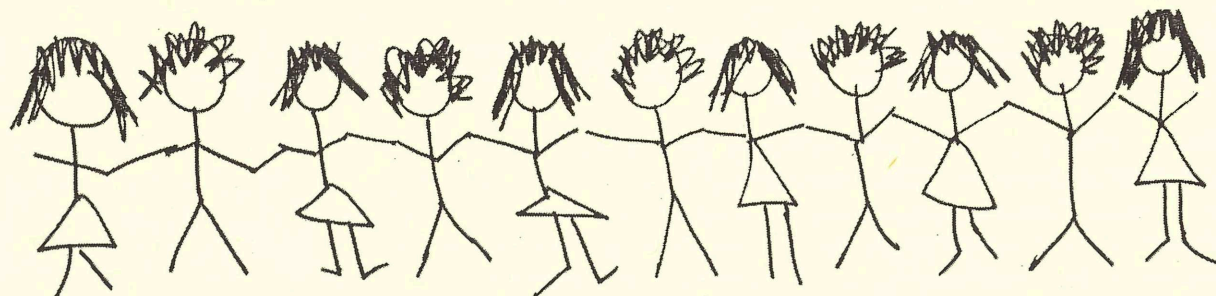
beauty of the rest of the album really starts to appear. Layers of distortion washing over clashing chords and intricate vocal melodies all mixed in such a democratic style provides for hours of listening amazement.

Once you reach the realization that the product of the layers is the attraction of Broken Social Scene, the album quickly becomes addictive. New tones, phrases, clicks, and riffs are found everywhere and each one is a new and exciting discovery. As every song reaches its full onslaught of guitars (6), drums (2 drummers), vocals (3-6 maybe), violins (2), synthesizers, bass, brass section and myriad of ProTools effects and editing techniques, one can't help but simply become lost, close their eyes and enjoy.



Painting: Liz Zack
Photo: Rachel Zack

Art: Annie Cronin



Floyd Hiar

*Concert Reviews

Rachel Yamagata - *Live at Bowdoin College*

Michelle Filteau

Rachael Yamagata just wants a normal guy. Unfortunately, too many past experiences have led her to the conclusion that love sucks and relationships never work out in the end. While she predicts that this will ultimately drive her to a life of “lesbianism and alcohol,” in the meantime, these experiences continue to inspire amazing music.

Yamagata performed at Bowdoin College’s Pickard Theater on Friday, September 23. While the house wasn’t quite packed, I still thought there was a pretty good turnout considering I had never even heard of her before. I went on a whim; nothing to do on a Friday night (gasp! At Bowdoin?! How unusual!), and plus I knew that Munny (aka Margaret Munford ’07) was opening for Yamagata, and I never miss Munny’s shows.

So Munny played and was awesome as usual (I got her CD, *Phonemes* – a collaboration with Jonah Gabry ’07 – last spring, and have been addicted to it ever since). “Just Another Lonely Insomniac Friend” is a personal favorite, but seriously, get yourself a copy of this CD or go to her next show! She has such a strong, unique voice, amazing lyrics, and a soothing sound. But time to stop raving about Munny; on to Rachael Yamagata.

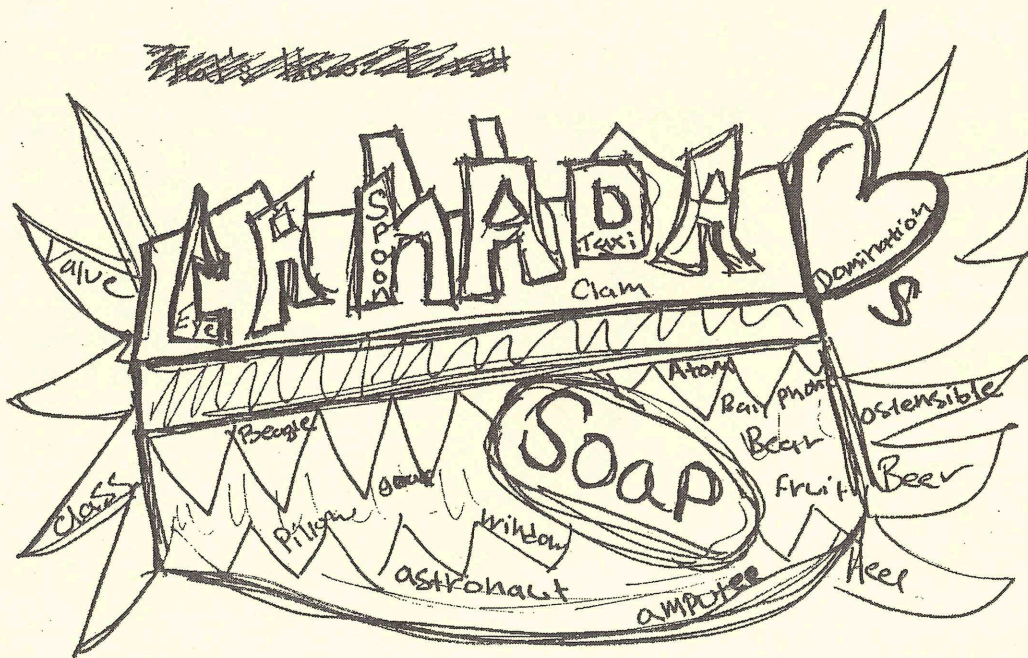
For those of you who neither attended the concert nor have heard her single, “Worn Me Down,” on the radio, I spent a week trying to put together a combination of singers that might somewhat accurately describe Yamagata’s sound. I think this is a pretty good equation:



Janis Joplin + Fiona Apple + Regina Spektor = Rachael Yamagata. Her voice is incredibly powerful and emits so much emotion. During her song, "Untitled," (which is also the hidden track on her CD, Happenstance) Yamagata performed minus her backup cellist and guitarist and mesmerized the audience with her heartbreaking lyrics and delicate guitar.

Now, you might be thinking, this woman sounds like a major downer – one song after another about the trials and tribulations of failed love. Actually, one major factor made Yamagata's concert the highlight of my week: she has an absolutely amazing personality. Funny and honest and a little bit crazy, Yamagata won the crowd over with her "no holds barred" storytelling style and her cynical and sarcastic side remarks. Coincidentally, September 23rd was Yamagata's "18th" birthday (the audience sang her a somewhat off-key rendition of Happy Birthday), and to make the situation even funnier, she insinuated she was drunk, but this could be neither confirmed nor denied. While some older audience members gasped when she dropped a few F-bombs during her stories, the majority of the audience seemed to really enjoy Yamagata's genuine performance.

Considering that I've been raving about Yamagata to everyone I've talked to this week, I decided to share my enthusiasm with you. I went out right after the show and bought Yamagata's CD, Happenstance, and I recommend you check it out, too! I've been playing it nonstop, particularly the songs "Be Be Your Love," "Worn Me Down," "I'll Find a Way," "Under My Skin," "I Want You," and "Reason Why"... you know, I pretty much love them all except for number six, "1963" (a little too poppy for me). I also perused her website, rachaelyamagata.com, where there are sound clips, tour dates, message boards, and a photo gallery – she's so beautiful! Basically, Rachael Yamagata is incredibly talented, gave a great concert, and put out an awesome CD... Check her out!



Art: Mike Tillotson

Medeski, Martin and Wood (aka MM dubs)
3-31-05

Pearl Street, Northampton, MA

Goerge Schlesinger

After making the trek through dense fog to Northampton, I made my way into the show around 8:30. Although the lobby looks rather shady, the stage area is cozy, with wooden dance floors and a slightly raised area for dancing. The band took the stage around 8:45 and started in typical fashion- they roamed around, looking for a groove. Since MMW always starts with improv, the initial tone of the show is always unknown, and therefore that much more exciting. Chris Wood started attacking his stand-up bass, laying down a solid theme. Billy Martin, the drummer, then introduced an African drum into the mix, which he struck with a cane-shaped apparatus. Add some funky work on the clavinet (a keyboard that produces a wah-wah sound like a guitar) and organ from Medeski, and the occasional cow-bell/Latin percussion from Martin and you have yourself a good, ole-fashioned jazz-funk gumbo.

The opening improv enveloped the entire crowd in head-nodding, body-swelling funk. Syncopated back beats and smooth plateaus and peaks of the Jazz trio generated many smiles. Instead of the sometime eerie explorations, MMW was playing upbeat, post-bop freak out music. The slicing and swishing movements of Medeski's hands on the clavinet dominated the early jams, filling in the empty space between drum breaks. After about 20 minutes, the groove fizzled out and Chris Wood took a brief bass solo, with Billy Martin providing random, atonal noises from his endless percussive sounds. He can knock around metal, Latin sounding percussion, or play a xylophone-hybrid that is reminiscent of oriental tones.

The highlight of the night for me was the two-song segue that closed the first set. The boys covered Beck's "Rowboat," a song that I like in its own regard, but had never heard by MMW. Altering the slow twang of Beck's pedal steel guitar, MMW sped up their jazz adaptation of the song, infusing it with their own touch of funkiness. The song dwindled down after 8 minutes, and the beat changed, with Billy laying down a slower, quasi-hip hop combination of snare and drum kick. As soon as I heard Medeski's opening riff, I recognized the beginning of "Night Marchers," an old-school MMW tune and a personal favorite that I had never seen performed live. Although succinct, "Night Marchers" was a treat and left me with a good taste in my mouth for the set break.

The second set continued the upbeat energy initially. Wood had a heavy presence with hand-clapping bass riffs, and Medeski painted an aural, ambient landscape. In contrast to other MMW shows that I have seen, Medeski did not have his classical piano. With only electronic keyboards, the sounds varied from the funk of his clavinet to the other-worldly space/eeriness of his synthesizers. The second set scattered a "Shacklyn Nights" and "Nocturne" within the fabric of numerous improvs. By the second improv, the trio shifted the vector and ventured into darker regions, with the first "scary" notes coming from one of the many keyboards in Medeski's arsenal. This started the mad scientist at work, producing both melodious and atonal madness from his keys of alchemy. After a continuous groove carried through the second set, the band played "Curtis," a track off of End of the World Party (Just in Case), their most recent album. The postmodern Jazz geniuses ended the night the way they had began it: with body gyrating funk.

J.
brown

Patrick

I was
in Texas once.
Austin, to be specific. I played
Air Hockey till I bled. Which was fairly early
in the game, as my opponent threw the puck at my face.
Well, to be honest, it was actually the thingy you hit the puck with, but
for the life of me, I have no fucking clue what those things are called.

Paddles? Well, that's just fucked up. They look nothing like what you would ever conceiv-
ably think of if somebody mentioned the term "Paddle." That's bullshit.

Anyhoo- Austin. Man, my friend and I got involved in some crazy shit back in the day.

Other than bleeding all over Air Hockey tables? Yeah, there were a few other things.

Like, we bought a bunch of fake moustaches, attached them, and then visited all the places
of business we had been to the day before, and bought the exact same things.

"Say, did you kids buy eggs, cigarettes, and a plunger yesterday?"

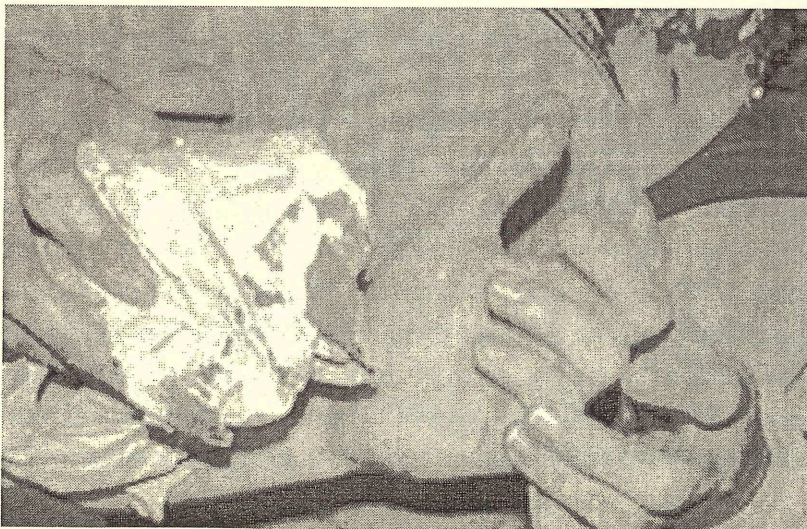
"We have no knowledge of what you speak. Those other kids probably didn't have the
impressive facial hair we possess, so therefore we cannot be the same people."

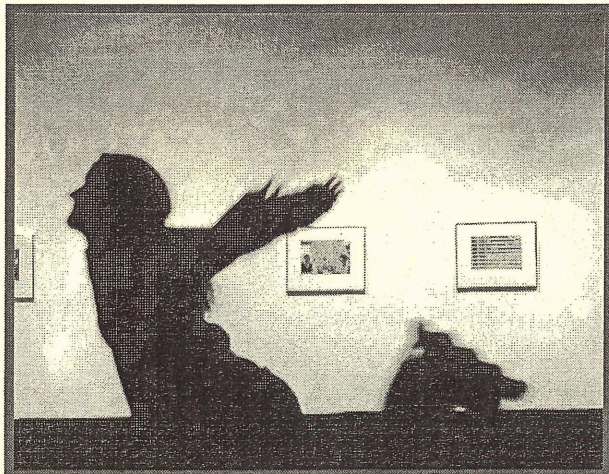
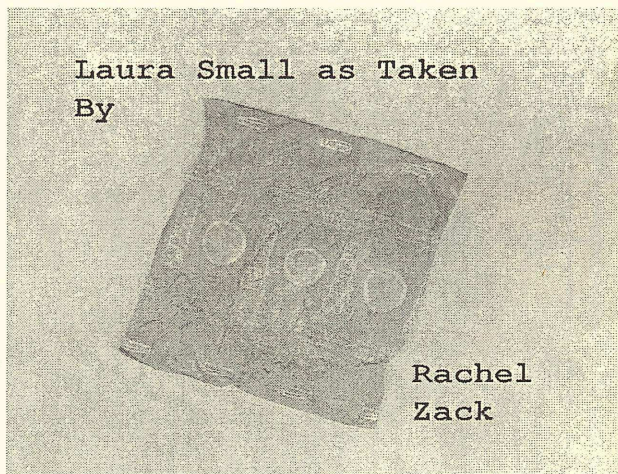
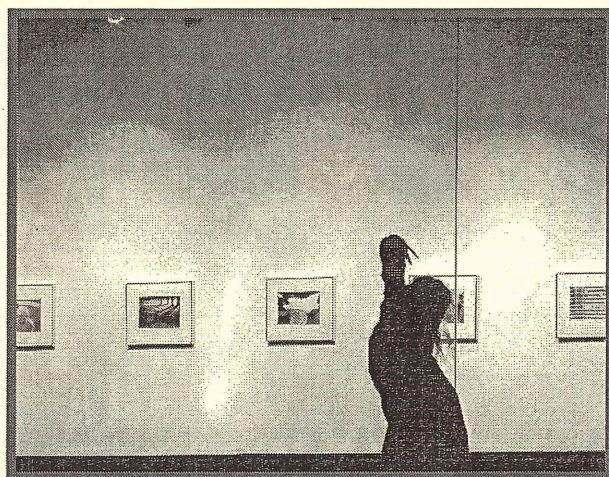
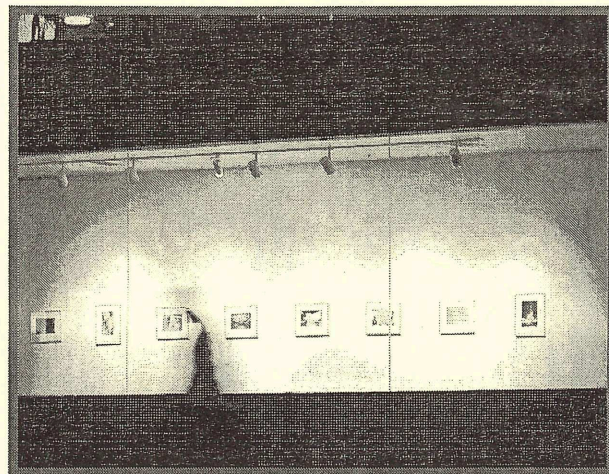
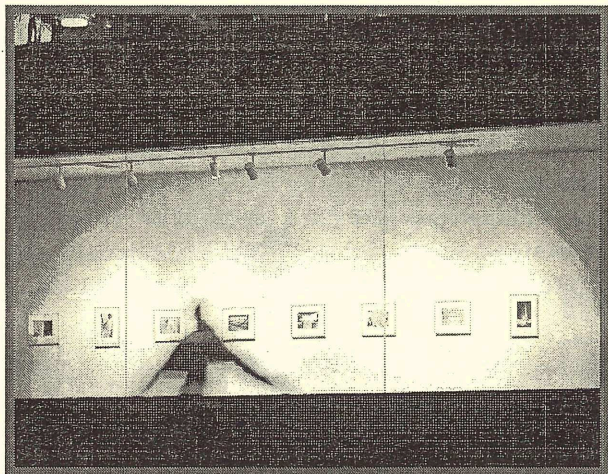
Alice from Checkout at the Austin Stop N Shop was certainly "served" that eve-
ning.

I remember Scientology was involved at some point, as well as
tonguing a twelve-year old boy, but I can't re-
member the context on either of those.

I am almost certain that they were
separate events, but it would be
awesome to claim I made out
with a twelve-year old scien-
tologist.

Woah. I got to see
if that's it's own
fetish.





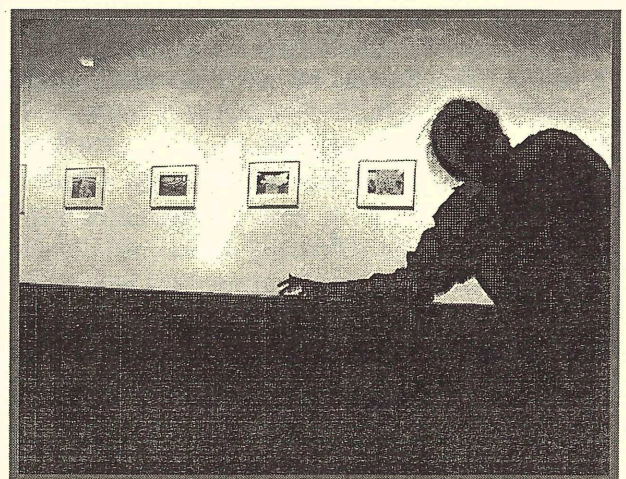
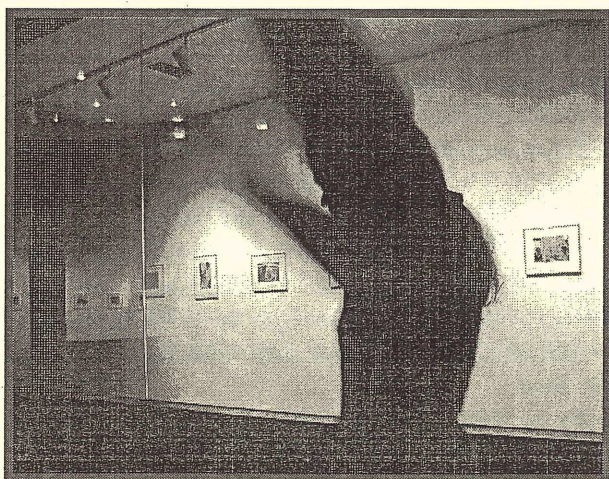
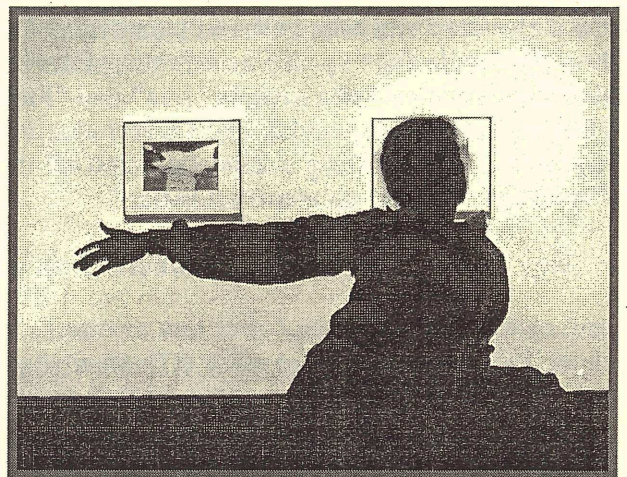
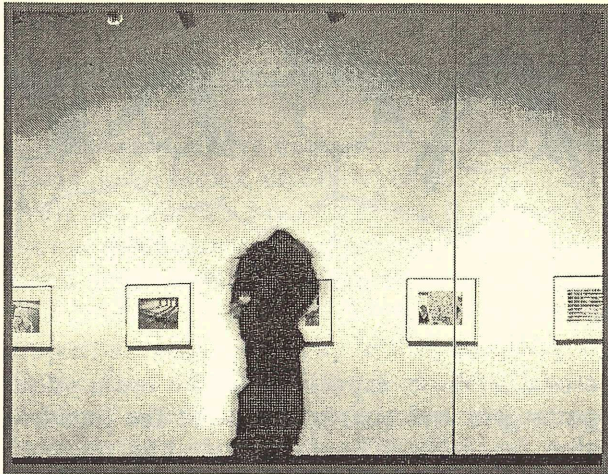
CONCERT CALANDER

September						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Sonic Youth- Audition					Ben Harper- BGA Paradise- BGA	Ben Harper- BGA Paradise- BGA
2 Fanning Liles- BGA Paradise						
3 M. Ward- Sonomaville Theater- Paradise Paradise Electric- Sonoma Paradise						
4 Black Mountain- Audition Paradise- BGA Paradise Mountain Quads- Paradise St.						
5 Supergrass- Mountain Hillside- Audition						
6 Chris-By Trachet- Audition						
7 The White- TD Berkshire Kenny- Valley Dean- Tanager						
8 The White- TD Berkshire Kenny- Valley Dean- Tanager						
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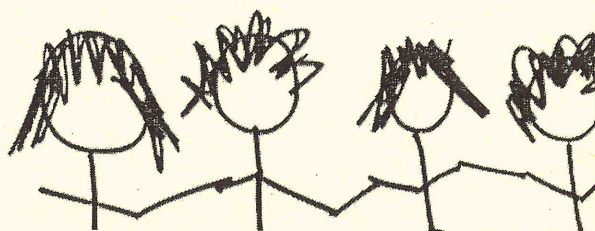
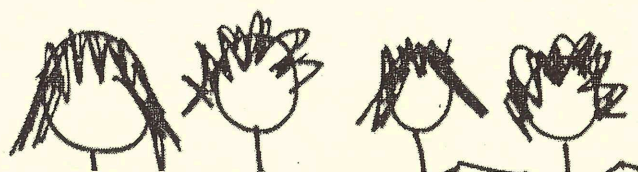
... and know about some sweet concerts. Tell us about them by emailing alee@bowdoin.edu so we can put them on this calendar. That will make the calander better and give us the hipster cred we crave.

Are you really tall and skinny? Do you drop obscure Arcade Fire song lyrics when talking to your friends in a last ditch attempt to make them understand you? Do you wear rediculously tight t-shirts? If so, you are probably hipper than us...

October						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	2 Massive Attack- Opheum	3 Built to Spill- Hwy & Audition	4 Eric Clapton- TD Barndrom	5 Eric Clapton- TD Barndrom	6 Less Than Jake- Audition	7 Regina Spektor- Audition Mare Cofin- Iron Horse
8 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	9 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	10 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	11 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	12 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	13 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise	14 LHO Korte- Narrows Center Brazilian Girls- Paradise
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Last Year's 5 Best Albums Tauwan Patterson



5. I'm Wide Awake It's Morning- Bright Eyes

It ain't easy trying to make it out in the lonesome crowded West, especially if you are a young twenty-something from Nebraska, but sometimes you gotta grin and bear it, roll with the punches, and just do it. This period of transition from child to adult is wonderfully documented by the indie wunderkid Conor Oberst, also known as Bright Eyes, on this stirring and highly detailed collection of alt-country tunes steeped in emotion and realism. *I'm Wide Awake It's Morning* presents Oberst at his most focused and confident, maintaining his lyrical, musical, and vocal strengths throughout the duration of the album. "Old Soul Song (For The New World Order)" is sung in a controlled manner until the very end when Oberst's emotion rings through, rising with the drums and guitars 'til all is brought home sweetly. It's an emotional device/dramatic effect that breathes life into Oberst's highly detailed lyrics. Tracks such as "Lua" and "First Day of My Life" [especially those featuring Emmylou Harris on backing vocals] find Oberst channeling his Heartbreaker era Ryan Adams with conviction and gusto. It's a fitting comparison and all the more proof that Bright Eyes is ready to move beyond the realm of being an acquired taste.

Key Tracks: Lua, We Are Nowhere (And It's Now), First Day of My Life

4. LCD Soundsystem- LCD Soundsystem

For the past 2-3 years, DFA has been churning out the hits, remixes, and compilations with one thing in mind: getting you to shake that ass. Said hits are a step away from the rave and ecstasy era tunes that were all the rage in the mid to late 90's. With DFA the music is tighter, relying more on live instrumentation and rhythms that get their inspiration from a wide variety of sources: disco, new wave, funk, and classic rock. One man behind all this cutting edge dance music is James Murphy, "a fat guy in a t-shirt doing all the singing" with his band LCD Soundsystem. On their self-tilted debut, Murphy and co. craft a first class mixtape where every jam is strategically placed so as not to mess up the flow. Things start off with the witty wink at the underground scene, "Daft Punk Is Playing At My House," a five minute cowbell rockin' party jam about a party so fly that "jocks can't get in the door and the neighbors can't call the police." The five minute disco jam parlay into the woozy lament that is "Too Much Love," a slower number whose sound and vibe still allow for a little hip shaking action. Soon you're being hit with the block rockin' "Tribulations," which segues into the punk rock rant "Movement" before coming down into the slurry mood piece "Never As Tired As When I'm Waking Up," a catch your breath pause for the dance floor junkies. The remaining four tracks [and those on the accompanying EP-like bonus disc] move you and soothe you like that mixtape your hip ass older sibling used to bump from time to time. James Murphy and the folks at DFA are onto something as evidenced by the sweat on your shirt and the pain in your feet.

Key Tracks: Daft Punk Is Playing At My House, On Repeat, Disco Infiltrator

3. Late Registration- Kanye West

Last year Kanye came with it on his debut album, *The College Dropout*. That disc, with its fresh beats, witty lyrics, and thought provoking subject matter was a breath of fresh air in the hip hop game. Well, the son of a bitch has done it again. Merely a year after his debut album, Kanye is back, and the words sophomore slump probably mean nothing to him. With a little help from Fiona Apple's right hand man Jon Brion, the beats remain on point, providing an expansive canvas on which Kanye can spit his fly ass lyrics. If anything, Brion shows Kanye how to remind folks that his beats are just as important as his lyrics by letting the music drag out way beyond the end of the last verse, as opposed to the favored hip hop trend of repeating the chorus 'til the song fades. [See the Latin tinged "Addiction" or the soulful guitar assisted ode to his mother "Hey Mama"] Everything about this album is just right; the samples ["Goldigger" is just one of the many fine examples], guest appearances [particularly Paul Wall on the thought provoking H-Town stomp of "Drive Slow"], and of course the lyrics and craftsmanship of the star of the show Mr. Kanye West himself. The shining moment on this disc is the Stevie Wonder does hip-hop "We Major" featuring Nas and Really Doe. The track is all soul harmonies, dope rhymes, strings, and mesmerizing keys. For seven and a half minutes you are transfixed and reminded of what hip-hop is missing and how peeps like Kanye are providing it. It's a thought that pops through your head repeatedly as you play the disc. Good job Mr. West. You've succeeded in taking these motherfuckers back to school.

Key Tracks: Drive Slow, Gone, We Major

2. Cloven Soft Shoe- My Barbarian

Once upon a time in the ultimate Los Angeles, an enchantress and four lovely lads came together to form a performance art musical act whose music would have a wide range of influences from Cole Porter to the B-52's to Kate Bush and Tin Pin Alley just to name a few. Calling themselves My Barbarian, this rag-tag of actors, scholars, and UCLA grads would go on to release their debut album *Cloven Soft-Shoe* under the radar without anyone noticing. Said album is truly a stunning and mystical affair, an album in which the majority of the tracks revolve around trying to make it in your twenties/making it as a performer in your twenties. It's all big kids with big dreams, buying tickets one way from NY to LA, dreaming of "being the first jew-yorican in the Bolshoi Ballet," while sitting lonely in their apartments smoking a lot of pot. The themes and thoughts on making it in the city are backed by music that is both adventurous and haunting, channeling post punk dance rock with operatic vocal flourishes one minute ["Dance You Witches (Dance)"] and psychedelic Brit rock of yesteryear the next [the fanciful dance inducing psychedelia of "Morgan Le Fay"]. In "The Upstairs," the band slows down as lead singer Alex Segade rhapsodizes on life in his spacious one room flat to the beat of a simple drum pattern and heavy keyboard melody. Rats line the walls, Vietnam vets rant, masturbation has now become a bore, and the stairs go up, up, up. In other words a whole lot of something is going on around him. The same can be said for the album. While My Barbarian doesn't necessarily take a kitchen sink approach to crafting their tunes, the incorporation of layered vocals, spoken word interludes, haunting song structures, and dips into various genres makes for one eclectic reflection of growing up actor/dancer/artist/confused trying to make it on your own.

Key Tracks: The Upstairs, Morgan Le Fay, Secret Ceremony

// Continued on page 22

1. The Best Party Ever- The Boy Least Likely To

After listening to this album from start to finish you almost have the urge to recite the album title with hunched shoulders, palms facing upward, looking slightly confused as if a question mark sits behind the word ever. Best party ever? That's a damn good question when the songs that encompass this disc by the English duo Joj Owen and Pete Hobbs deal with child-like grown up fears of growing old, growing up [the toe tapping country breeze of "Fur Soft As Fur"], towns full of monsters [the rhythmic and vocal urgency of "Monsters"], and seeing spiders when one closes one's eyes. ["I See Spiders When I Close My Eyes," a guitar strummed diddy for those with OCD]. Seeking comfort from the horrors, the duo comes to us for solace, hitching their apple wagons to our stars, and asking us to be gentle with them, all the while keeping an eye out for any unsuspecting terror, which may explain why they choose to sleep with guns up under their pillow. Yes it is all very child-like indeed, and both the lyrics and musical palette they work with [synths, strings, harmonicas, guitars, tambourines, sweet follow the bouncing ball harmonies, and the like] give off a fluffy children's book/cd vibe, but the duo is getting at something more. Comfort is the best medicine and with all that is bad out there lurking in the shadows, it's nice to find that person, place, or thing that makes you feel safe. It's a sentiment echoed by Jof near the middle of the album on the melancholy "Battle of the Boy Least Likely To" when all he seeks is to get the one he loves alone and next to him. This girl quietly saves him again and again and that, for him, is truly the best thing ever.

Key Tracks: Be Gentle With Me, I'm Glad I Hitched My Apple Wagon To Your Star, Sleeping With A Gun Under My Pillow

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Brought to you by WBOR, Alice Lee, and Zachary Tcheyan

